

SB 364

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A
Perpetual Income
from
Date Palms



1914

Reed-Williams Corporation

Black Building

Los Angeles, California

SB364
R35

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A Prophecy and Proof

An income of \$5,000.00 a year for you for more than a century can be yielded from a full-bearing five-acre date orchard here in Southern California, and the value of each acre of such an orchard should be five thousand dollars.

This statement must interest you—as it did me. The more I thought about it the more interested I became. But for the fact that this statement was made by men who have made an exhaustive study of the subject of date growing, both in the old world and here in Southern California and Arizona, I would consider it greatly exaggerated. I frankly admit that the statement is the most astounding one I have ever heard in conjunction with profits to be derived from investment in land; nor was I aware that California's soil was adapted to the commercial cultivation of this Oriental fruit—so I decided to carefully investigate the subject.

For I know that, if this statement were true, such a heritage would be far more stable and beneficial to me, as well as to my children, than a good many thousand dollars invested in life insurance. I compared this production of \$5,000.00 a year from only five acres of date palms with various kinds of other investments I was familiar with through my thirty odd years' experience as a banker and land owner—the comparison makes the statement more startling. Every other agricultural investment I have known, even those where much greater acreage was employed, and in the most bountiful years and under the most favorable conditions, are incomparable with this statement of the revenue which may be derived from date growing.

My investigation thus far convinces me that a return of \$5,000.00 from a matured five-acre date garden in California is a reasonably conservative statement, even greater returns being yielded to-day in Arabia, Mesopotamia and North Africa,

including Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco—where all palms imported into California were obtained, many fully matured palms bearing three hundred to six hundred pounds of fruit each. Similarly remarkable date crops are being harvested in the United States, the fruit of one tree owned by Mr. Fred Johnson of Indio, California, in this year of 1914, embraces sixteen large bunches which, I am told, Mr. Johnston has sold under contract for \$1.00 per pound.

I find it also interesting to learn that the date palm is something *more* than a fruit tree which furnishes the principal means of existence to hundreds of thousands of people, namely, to the Arab; it is a *sacred* institution identified with the Semitic race since the dawn of history and consecrated by Mohammed, both in his public and private life. In these countries date gardens have been the chief source of food supply, year in and year out, for 500 to 2,000 years.

Many of the foremost tree-culture experts in America have for several years been giving the subject of date culture much consideration, and have taken great pains in its investigation here and in the old world. The Government of the United States has for some years maintained an experimental date garden in the Salton Basin of Southern California, because it realizes the worth of the palm as a staple food-producer.

In the *Atlantic Monthly* for August, 1914, appears an article entitled "The Agriculture of the Garden of Eden." This article was written by J. Russell Smith, a Professor in the State University of Pennsylvania, and a tree-culture expert. It is very interesting reading and unquestionably one of the strongest commentaries that I have seen in my search for authentic information on the subject of date growing—the greatest incentive to the movement "back to the farm," or rather back to conditions which prevailed in the Garden of Eden before the expulsion of Adam and Eve; so I give it here, in part, as the unbiased, impartial opinion of a man whose work in this line is widely appreciated:—



Some Date-Palm History

“The story of the Garden of Eden has been extensively used by those who would influence human action. But strange to say one of the most evident lessons appears to have been overlooked. It is for the *farmer* that the well-known drama has the plainest teaching of all. The race has been subjected to needless toil because the agriculturist has left this part of Scripture entirely to the theologians. Regardless of theological differences we can agree that the agriculture of the Garden was good, because it supported the race comfortably and without labor. What more could it possibly do for mankind?

“The inhabitants of Eden plainly lived without toil. They were born to that leisure for which we strive so fiercely in this work-a-day world. So far as the man was concerned, the sting of the expulsion was the fact that he had to go forth and eat bread in the sweat of his face. Jehovah did not enforce this sentence at hard labor by putting a guard over Adam. Eve was not placed in charge, nor yet the wily serpent. The offender was merely driven forth from the garden that was full of trees. *The trees had made it Paradise.* Every tree that was pleasant to the sight and good for food was there. The inhabitants walked about in the comfortable shade and ate. When thirst arose, there were the juices of fruits and palm wine.

“The spontaneous products of the Garden even supplied the first demand for clothes. On that bitter day of expulsion these erstwhile happy harvesters of tree-crops were driven forth from this rich and fruitful shade, driven to the fields to eat the herb of the field and to win bread by the sweat of their faces.

“Since we are all more or less lazy, and only some of us are religious, it is foresooth *amazing* that our efforts at being restored to Paradise have been limited so exclusively to the domain of religion. This is the more peculiar because the religion has to be taken on faith, while the agriculture of Paradise could be seen

and felt and tasted, and that without labor. Even yet no one has striven to restore it for the relief of a weary world. It is high time the husbandman took up his Scripture.

“Eden is a Babylonian tale, and Babylonia is a land of dates. It was so, long, long before Abraham went up toward Palestine out of Ur of the Chaldees. At a time which was to him mythological, the date tree had become sacred to his Semitic ancestors along the Euphrates. It is from this Babylonia that we now receive each Autumn our argosies of dates wherewith to regale ourselves at Christmas time. To us they are sweetmeats, but to the dwellers in the land of dates they are a great staple of life.

“Eden was in this land of date trees, and a visit to a date-growing oasis makes clear the whole story of the Garden and the expulsion.

“No other land could then, or can yet rival the oasis in this picture it gives of the easy life and the burning contrast of expulsion.

“This easy living in the oasis is made possible because of the workings of that wonderful engine of production—namely—the date tree. That is the agricultural lesson from Eden that we should go back a bit toward Paradise and learn to use trees, which are Nature’s greatest engines of food production. For a few thousand years we have taken the expulsion and curse too literally, and have been living as the fallen Adam was told to—by digging and sweating and growing the herbs of the field. Trees should be made to work for us as they do for the Semite. Little do we of the West appreciate the potency, the almost automatic potency, of these botanic engines, the date tree. No other type of agriculture produces half so easily.

“Now, as for the last five or ten thousand seasons, the date tree owner begins his year’s work in the springtime by climbing his tall trees to fertilize their blossoms. The ascent is easy because of the natural steps furnished by the notching left by the



stubs of the leaves of past years. The blossoms of the fruitful female palm are fertilized by a dust of pollen shaken from a sprig of male flowers in the hand of the husbandman. This economical device permits a very small proportion of male trees to suffice and the garden can be filled to crowding with the fecund female trees. Once the blossoms are fertilized, little more is done for the tree but watering at rather frequent intervals, and this is often a light task, the mere diversion of a stream. Many of the palms are cultivated only one year in three, but with this small labor they are heavy yielders. The open feathery palm leaves permit much light to filter through, so that oranges, figs, and apricots grow beneath the palms, and garden vegetables can grow among these lesser fruit trees. The vegetables pay the cost, the rest is profit, and the high values are explained.

“Thus the date garden leads all other kinds of agriculture in the amount of food produced, and this tree merits the title of King of Crops on the purely civil service basis of leadership in performance. Small wonder that the prehistoric Semite called it sacred. Pound for pound, the date is as nutritious as bread, and when harvest is weighed, it is three to twenty-fold that of wheat. After a score of years or less, the best wheat lands are exhausted by continuous production; but we know that certain oases have yielded dates regularly since they were visited and described by Roman writers a score of centuries ago. They are to-day so prized that the Arab owner will refuse \$5,000 in gold for an acre of good date garden. Its yield warrants the valuation.”

Old World Date Yields

As Paul B. Popenoe, editor the *Journal of Heredity*, of Washington, D. C., is accredited as a most careful and thorough investigator, both from the scientific and practical points of view, I shall refer to his volume on “Date Growing in the Old and New Worlds,” from the chapter on “Profits of Date Growing.” Mr.

Popenoe is one of the few American date experts who has made an exhaustive journey through the native date countries in order to thoroughly acquaint himself with every phase of date-growing and date-selling.

“Date growing is not a ‘get-rich-quick scheme,’ but if a man gives to it the attention that would be necessary to make a success of any other business, he should make a success of growing dates. His profits will depend first on the size of the crop, and second, on the price which he receives for it.

“As to the first, the usual estimate in the United States is 100 pounds for each adult palm per year. I believe this is a conservative estimate. Let us check it up by the experience of other people, bearing in mind that a palm should yield *more* in the United States than it would in another country, because it should get better care.

“The Algerian government estimates the annual production of a Deglet Nur palm at 40 kg., or 88 pounds, but declares that this is probably an under-estimate. As Deglet Nur regularly bears more heavily with us than it does in its original home, 100 pounds seems a reasonable estimate here. Most of the North African varieties bear more heavily than this. For Tunis, Masselot considers Luzi to be the shyest bearer, with an annual yield of 55 pounds, and Rishti and Hamraya the heaviest, at 220 pounds each. The average of 92 varieties which he has investigated is 116.5 pounds per tree.

“In Egypt, the English estimate a yield of 172 pounds per tree, and yet the trees are set much closer together than in the United States. Egyptian varieties bear more heavily than those of some of other countries; a yield of 250 pounds for Birket al Hajji in Arizona, is not considered exceptional.

“In the Sudan the average yield, according to official returns is 160 pounds.

“All of these estimates are the work of trained scientific observers. When we turn to the Arabs we cannot feel the same



confidence, but I have checked up their estimates in many districts and believe I have reached correct figures.

“At Baghdad, a palm which yields less than 100 pounds a year is considered a very shy bearer indeed. Khustawi, for instance, is so considered; but even with the lax Arab methods of cultivation it averages from 75 to 125 pounds, while a crop of 300 pounds of Zahidi or Barban is quite ordinary. Conditions are about the same at Busreh and in Oman; I would put 150 pounds as the average yield of a good palm.”

What Imperial Valley Date Profits Should Be

Continuing further, Mr. Popenoe says:

“What can be done elsewhere can certainly be done in the United States. Any one can find out from the government what their average yields are, and if he does so, I am satisfied that he will admit that the figure of 100 pounds is very reasonable.

“Of course, exceptional yields can sometimes be found. A crop of 500 or 600 pounds is not rare among Arabs, and has been closely approached, if not equaled, in America. If we could secure some of the religious atmosphere of Mohammad's home, we might do even better, for Faqir Amin al Madina says, ‘we have seen and bear witness as to palms, that some palms bear, each one, verily, three ardabs of dates.’

“With 100 pounds per tree and 50 trees to the acre, we have an annual yield of 5,000 pounds, or two and one-half tons, of dates to the acre. The price at which these will sell has been the subject of much difference of opinion. At present it is not difficult to sell the highest grade of dates, well packed, at \$1.00 or more a pound in California. There is no reason why this price should not be maintained for some years yet, while home-grown dates are still a novelty. It certainly will not be maintained permanently, but there will always be a demand for the finest

dates, packed like confectionery, at confectionery prices. As to the bulk of a crop of dates from palms of standard varieties, properly handled, my own idea is that the price is never likely to fall below 20 cents a pound to the grower. This I offer as an average price—there will be many culls that must go at lower figures, but there should also be a considerable amount of fancy fruit which will bring two or three times the sum mentioned. Taking the average at 20 cents a pound to the grower, with the conservative estimate of 100 pounds to a tree and 50 palms to the acre, we may calculate on a gross annual return from a well-managed plantation at \$1000 per acre.

“This should begin with the fifth year. In the third year some varieties should bear enough fruit to pay the cost of upkeep, and in the fourth year to return a fair profit. From the fifth year they will bear well for a century or more.

“This figure takes no account of the production of offshoots, which, with choice varieties, promises for some time to be fully as valuable a product as dates in the United States. Some remarkable records have been made already in this respect, but to be well within the limit of probability we will assume that each tree yields only one offshoot a year, from its fifth to its twentieth year of age. Such a production should not diminish the yield of dates, while if the offshoot is sold at \$5 (a price considerably below that now current), it will increase the annual gross revenue of the plantation by \$250 per acre, and it is probable that with most varieties two offshoots a year could be taken from the palm, without reducing the average yield of fruit below 100 pounds. This would make the annual gross return of the plantation \$1500 per acre. I believe that the offshoots alone will be, for some years, of sufficient value to pay all expenses of running a properly managed plantation in the United States, leaving all returns from marketing fruit as clear profit.

“This would mean, under the best conditions, \$1000 a year per acre net profit from a plantation. This estimate does not



agree with many others that have been put forward, and in such a case each man may weigh the evidence and judge for himself. Many think the price of dates will be much higher than I have assumed, and I am far from saying that they may not be right—in fact, I know they are right so far as the immediately succeeding years are concerned. Those who get into the date industry at once in the right way can make profits that, for a few years at least, will be extraordinary.”

Expense of Maintaining a Date Farm

“The probable expense of running a date plantation should not be large as compared with the expense of other agricultural enterprises,” says Mr. Popenoe, in the chapter on “Profits of Date Growing” in his book. The difference between good and bad management is so great that one can hardly quote definite figures, but it may be pointed out that the amount of labor is not great at any time of the year, and that even during the picking of the crop fewer men will be needed than with many agricultural staples. If the owner is his own manager he will have all the profits for himself, so there is certainly a great future in the industry for men who own plantations of ten or fifteen acres. One man should be able to keep up such a plantation alone, at all times of the year except during the crop picking season. If a man has to be hired the expense will be greatly increased, unless on a large estate, for only a thoroughly competent man can be considered. In a favorable situation such as Coachella or Imperial Valleys the expense of picking the crop is not great; if it is ripened by the slow artificial method the cost will be nothing save that of the little labor required, and the expense involved in marketing is less than that with most fruits, because the date is not perishable, does not need to be kept in iced cars or cold storage, and can always be held for a favorable market. As the industry is new, there is naturally much yet to be learned about marketing dates to the best ad-

vantage, but that is a problem which Americans are well able to handle, and when date growers have as efficient a co-operative organizations as the orange growers of California, the percentage of profit to the owner will be very high.

“Perhaps the safest and most helpful way to consider the cost will be to make a comparison with the cost of lemon growing in this State. Any other industry would do, but I take the lemon growers because information regarding their operations has been collected with particular care, and may be obtained by any one who is interested.

“It will be found, reference being had to the cost of lemon growing, that the date grower has the advantage of the citrus grower so far as cost of production is concerned, while his profits from the sale of fruit are much greater. There is every reason to believe that the grower can bring a date plantation into bearing, including the cost of land and water, for not more than \$1000 an acre and, after it is in bearing, pay the entire expense of upkeep, for some years at least, by the value of his offshoots, leaving all the income from the fruit as profit; and this net income ought to be, in a well-managed plantation of the best varieties, not less than \$1000 per acre per year. For the first few years, while fancy prices prevail, the grower may secure a much larger annual net return if he is keen enough to grasp the opportunities. And since he may pay a large part of the expense of bringing his plantation into bearing by growing a subsidiary crop, we may well conclude that there are few agricultural opportunities today more attractive than that presented by the culture of the date palm.”

Imperial Valley Ideal for Dates

When I became convinced that date growing was a practical and proven branch of agriculture for a well-defined portion of Southern California, I went still further and obtained invaluable information on soil analysis, and care of palm trees. Here

again I desire to refer to the statements made by Mr. Popenoe in his book, "Date Growing in the Old and New Worlds." He devotes an entire chapter to the date palm countries, of which the following excerpts are most interesting to us:

"In the United States, Southern California is indisputably the region best adapted to commercial date culture. Salton Basin, and its close neighboring valleys, with their slight rainfall, intense summer heat and prevailing sand soil, exactly fill the conventional requirements as they were outlined in the preceding paragraphs. For late varieties which require a high sum total of heat to mature, and for the Saharan varieties in general, this valley cannot be surpassed. It would probably prove equally well suited to date varieties from the interior of Arabia, if we could secure any such. In the Sahara, Deglet Nur dates, which grow in the heavy clay of the Ziban, are scarcely inferior to those which grow in the light sand of the Suf. The lower part of the Colorado River Valley—which includes Imperial Valley—may be classed with these two, physical conditions being much the same.

"Within the two states, California and Arizona, are the only regions where it can be said at present with confidence and on the basis of real facts that date culture is profitable in the United States. There are some other regions where it is possible, and where it may be and probably will be proved to be profitable, but real data has not yet been accumulated which enables one to speak with certainty.

"For the man who wants to go into the commercial production of dates in the United States at once, the facts which I have quoted concerning other lands, will have little importance; he can only be advised to confine himself to the Salton Basin in California, or the lower lying parts of Arizona. In deciding as to the climate for dates, it has been the custom to sum up the maximum of heat but this is a misleading method, for Vinson has clearly shown that the growth of the palm varies, not according to the

heat of the day, but according to the added heat of day and night; that is, the palm grows best when the night temperature is nearest that of the day, provided both are fairly high.

“In the choice of soil, few fruits seem so easily pleased as the date. It is usually said that a sandy loam is best, and such a soil is certainly good; but the statement that it is best is a dogma that would be very difficult to prove.”

The Date Garden—a Perpetual Income

Imperial Valley having demonstrated conclusively its adaptability to commercial date growing; recognized date authorities everywhere realizing this and advising the planting of dates here; the right kind of land being accessible and water in abundance—the logical thing then, was to no longer let this opportunity slip by, but to start a date garden myself. This I have done, setting out some 750 of the finest imported date offshoots I could obtain, which cost \$7.60 apiece. Mr. Williams has planted 400 imported palms costing \$7.60 each—approximately ten thousand dollars invested in imported date offshoots in our combined acreage. This money is most conservatively invested, we believe, and from it we anticipate the return of a giant revenue. We have studied the date palm industry diligently and can conscientiously recommend an investment in it, knowing, approximately, what returns are to be expected.

In addition to the planting of two date gardens for ourselves, we have chosen a 320-acre tract, near ours, which we have divided into 32 date gardens and which we now offer for sale. This tract is situated in what is known as the Mesquite Lake district of Imperial Valley. It is five and a half miles southeast of Brawley and six and a half miles northeast of Imperial, by county roads, and within two miles of a railroad station. This district is acknowledged to be one of the richest portions of Imperial Valley. Only thirty-two investors can avail themselves of this oppor-



tunity of investing. First, because there will be only thirty-two date farms or gardens developed; secondly, because only a limited number of desirable offshoots can be secured and imported into the United States from year to year. The date palm is a sacred institution in these primitive countries, from which it is exported into California, and much trouble is experienced in persuading the native to part with his young date trees at any price. Hence, the scarcity.

Each of these subdivisions is to have five acres planted to genuine imported date offshoots in orchard form, and the rest put into alfalfa, barley or some similar crop. The Reed-Williams Corporation—of which I am the President—owns this 320-acre tract, will take charge of it and develop every one of these individual properties up to and including the time of their maturity, when they are to be turned over to the owners.

At no time will the investor need be concerned about his date garden, his trees or their outcome. He will have no taxes to pay, no water bills or assessments to meet, no hired man to worry about, no unhealthy trees to replace at his expense, no spraying or pollinating to do before his orchard is turned over to him—everything will be done, and done in expert manner, by a competent manager.

To properly bring a date orchard into bearing, which requires about seven years, one should have practical knowledge on the subject of date growing as well as experience in handling the soil and irrigation in Imperial Valley. It is therefore impracticable for one who is not equipped with these requirements to undertake the propagation of a date orchard on a small scale; it would be too expensive to retain the services of an experienced date cultivator to oversee a limited acreage. But with our larger acreage, comprising 6400 palms, we can afford to pay a competent man to superintend the growing of these date orchards and for this purpose we have secured the services of Mr. F. O. Popehoe, President of the West India Gardens, than whom there is no

higher authority on date production in this country, and whose services we are able to employ only because of his personal interest in the development of the date industry in this country.

A perpetual income of \$5,000.00 a year from a five-acre California date farm, is not all the benefit to be derived from the investment I now suggest. You have an *additional* five acres planted to alfalfa, barley or other small crop when your fully matured date farm is turned over to you—and from these adjoining acres you should receive a revenue proportionate with intelligent cultivation, or you can plant it to dates with offshoots from your own palms.

From each female date palm one or more offshoots will be put forth every year—until the tree is some fifteen to twenty years old—enough of these should be kept by the owner to plant his remaining five acres to date palms. I am convinced that the thirty-two men who invest now will want to *double* their date farms in this manner. However, if they do not care to do so, they should have no trouble in disposing of the offshoots at a good price. Today such offshoots are selling in Imperial Valley at \$7.50 to \$10.00 each.

Doubling your acreage in date palms means no less than *doubling your income*. This is true with most forms of commercial plant life, perhaps, but the reward will not be as large in other agricultural lines as from a well-kept date orchard. Profit is, of course, the prime factor in interesting any investor, but cost of land and production, governed by profit, is the first great consideration. I have told you briefly how this corporation is providing a date farm for thirty-two men; now let me give you the cost of such an undertaking.



Cost of a Date Farm

The thirty-two farms such as I have just described—five acres of each set to imported date offshoots—are now offered at \$6,250.00 each. The reasonableness of this price will be apparent when you consider that date offshoots, such as we will plant in these thirty-two farms, are selling to-day at \$7.50 to \$10.00 each, together with the cost of expert care. Our wholesale importation of 10,000 offshoots, however, will secure for us the reduced price of \$5.00 per palm. On each of the individual farms 200 imported offshoots are to be set out in orchard form, forty to the acre. Our price of \$6,250.00 is based upon a conservative estimate of what each acre of this land set to imported palms will be worth immediately as the young palms are set out—that estimate being \$1,000.00 an acre for the five-acre orchard. In addition, the adjoining five acres of each farm must be easily worth \$250 per acre, as they will be in condition to convert into more date orchard at any time.

Payment is to be made for these farms in the following manner: \$1,000.00 upon the execution of a contract of sale, and \$250 payable every six months, on the first of March and September of each year until all but \$2,000.00 of the purchase price has been paid. A reduction of \$2,000.00 will be made to every purchaser who may elect to take advantage of our cancellation offer—this making the actual cost to you of each date farm \$4,250.00 instead of \$6,250.00.

This offer to cancel the final payment of \$2,000.00 is probably the most unusual feature of our proposition for these date gardens. It is infinitely stronger as a proof of our claim than any other selling argument we could advance; it shows the great degree of confidence we have in the date industry ourselves, and it should give added confidence to every prospective owner.

Our Cancellation Offer

In lieu of the final payment of \$2,000.00, due under the contract of sale, we will accept the crops to be harvested the same year in which said final payment falls due, and we will convey the tract by deed, free and clear of all incumbrances, together with eight shares of water stock appurtenant thereto, upon notice to the corporation on or before the first day of March in the year the said final payment becomes due; besides, we will care for the orchard and gather the crops at our own cost and expense and yield up the possession of the tract when the dates thereon have been harvested, in the fall of that year, in good condition.

If our estimate of the value of this crop which we offer to take in lieu of the final payment of \$2,000.00, when the palms are seven years old, is nearly correct, it will be worth double \$2,000.00 or more; so we do not consider that we are taking grave chances in offering to pay \$2,000.00 net for it.

In other words, I extend to a limited number of investors the opportunity of buying a ten-acre farm in the rich Mesquite Lake district of Imperial Valley, the five acres of date land alone valued at \$1,000.00 an acre. Seven years are required to mature these date palms, at the end of which time these owners will have a never-ending yield of a delicious fruit that should sell for twenty cents a pound at the very minimum, according to the predictions of horticultural experts. For this perpetual income an investment of \$6,250.00 is required, or \$4,250.00 where the purchaser relinquishes his claim on the crop of dates and grain the year his final installment is due.

Your Success Assured

Imperial Valley is now producing very high-grade dates both for confectionery and commercial purposes. The Brock

Date Farm near Heber, California—a short distance from our date land—made a successful showing last year, although it is generally acknowledged that this date garden is by no means up to standard, because it was greatly neglected up to the time Mr. Brock undertook its management. However, Mr. Brock received 85 cents a pound for his best dates, 50 cents a pound for his second-class dates, and 20 cents a pound for what are known as “culls,” in 1913, and this year the Brock garden presents a very much improved appearance, many of the trees at this writing having 200 pounds of fruit on them, for which Mr. Brock will doubtless receive a high price.

At Indio, California, is located one of the Government Experimental Stations where date culture is being forwarded. On an adjacent ranch are four trees that produced 300 pounds of fruit last year (1913), which sold for \$1.00 a pound. Twelve imported trees on the same ranch are now laden with 75 bunches of dates. An offer of \$25 apiece for some of the offshoots from these palms was refused, as the owner wished to set more palms and considered them worth that to himself.

On the American Date Company's farm, situated a few miles from Mecca, California, are some three hundred to four hundred palms, ranging from six to eight years old. The crop on these young palms last year was estimated at 2,000 pounds and sold for 75 cents per pound.

There are many other prominent instances where date palms in Imperial Valley and vicinity are producing from 90 to 200 pounds of fruit per tree, and if expert opinion may be relied upon, such yields are not out of the ordinary in this locality.

I have here in the office some very fine specimens of dates grown in Imperial Valley last year, all of them being decidedly larger, of a better color, and more tempting generally than any date I have ever seen sold in the United States, even in the most exclusive confectionery stores.

It is Mr. Paul Popenoe's belief that there will always be a high-priced trade in fancy boxed dates in the United States, although not much of the total output can be expected to sell in the distant future at \$1.00 a pound, as it did in Los Angeles last fall. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that for this confectionery trade, prices will not fall below 50 cents a pound for some years. At that time, there will be the larger trade in strictly first-class dates, preferably in small boxes. The most profitable part of this trade will be the early sales of Persian Gulf varieties during the months of August and September. These clean, delicious, attractive Imperial Valley dates ought to bring not less than 20 cents to 30 cents a pound for many years to come. Please bear in mind that we are going to plant forty date palms to the acre—200 in each garden—and that at 30 cents per pound and an average yield of 100 pounds per tree, your income will be \$1,200.00 an acre—or \$6,000.00 gross from your five acres of dates.

Furthermore, the consumption of dates is certain to increase in the United States as the production increases. At present the United States consumes a ridiculously small amount, only 16,000 tons a year—or something less than a pound for every family per year; whereas, in the Arabic countries, a family often consumes *ten or fifteen pounds per day*. Many residents of the United States have never tasted, clean, fresh dates, and when they find they can buy them at reasonable prices, the demand is certain to jump. The present consumption will be multiplied by ten, twenty or thirty, and still be small compared with that of fruits which are *less nutritious*. No matter if *all* the land in the United States adaptable to date culture were planted with imported palms, the supply would still be far less than the demand.

Mr. Popenoe adds further on in his book:

“The French in Algeria can put out Deglet Nurs, however, that are packed in an attractive manner, and owing to cheaper labor can probably do so more cheaply than we can. At present



choice dates, well packed, sell at twenty and twenty-five cents a pound in France and Algeria, and as the demand is steady the price will hardly go lower than this. They may possibly interfere with the sale of American dessert dates at fancy prices, such as \$1.00 a pound, but their competition can hardly be considered if twenty-five or thirty cents a pound retail is taken as the basis for calculations.

“Furthermore, the market for fresh dates will always be a local monopoly, and I believe it will be a profitable one, for the fresh date is not too perishable to be shipped, and is liked by everyone who tastes it.

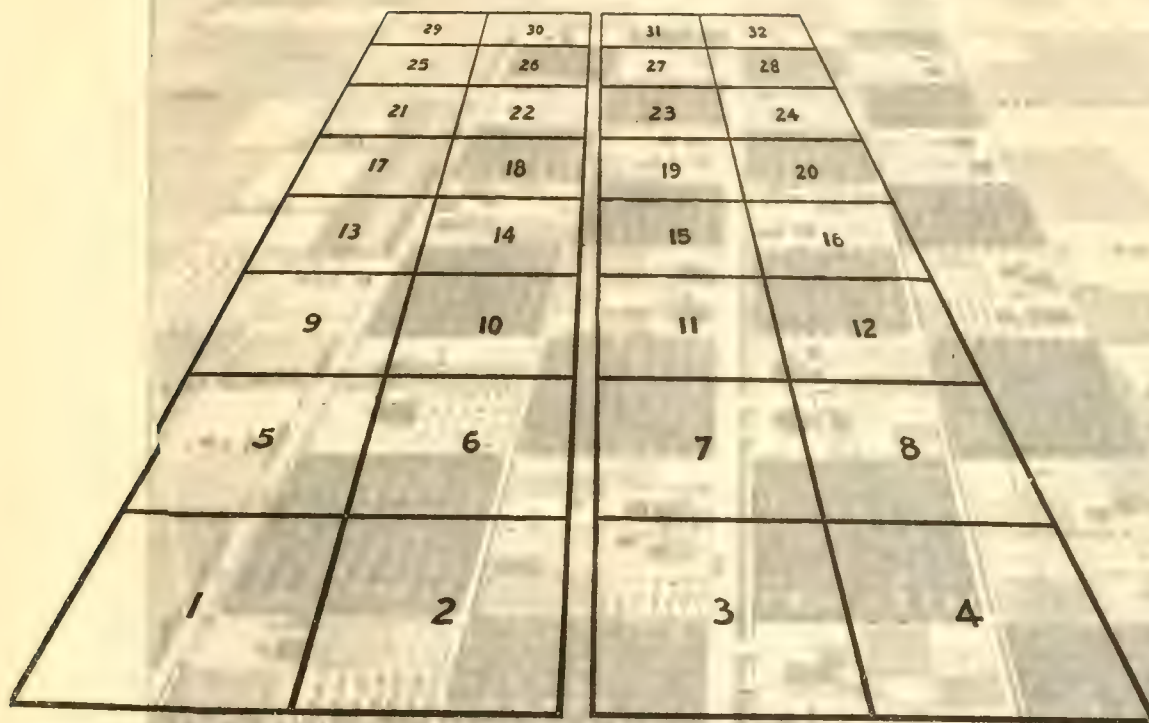
“The total annual consumption of dates in the United States is now in the neighborhood of 32,000,000 pounds a year, or something like five ounces per person per year—a ridiculously small amount. The great food value of the date allows every one to purchase it as an integral part of the family diet—not as a luxury or dessert, but with the feeling that it is a part of his nourishment. Furthermore, the American public now scarcely knows the value of the date in any form except raw, and the teaching of methods of cooking will increase the consumption. So far as the factor of supply and demand goes, I believe that the consumption of dates will far exceed the production in America for many years, and that locally-grown dates will hardly find competitors in the imported fruit. As people come to know what delicious, clean, fresh, home-grown dates are, the price may be expected steadily to rise rather than fall, no matter how fast the production increases in California and Arizona.

“These are the reasons which lead me to believe that an estimate of twenty cents a pound gross return to the grower is conservative. Others may figure on a different basis, arrive at a different conclusion. Any one interested in the industry can consider the facts and from them form his own estimate.”

It is probably needless to say that we anticipate receiving handsome profits from the production and sale of these date gar-

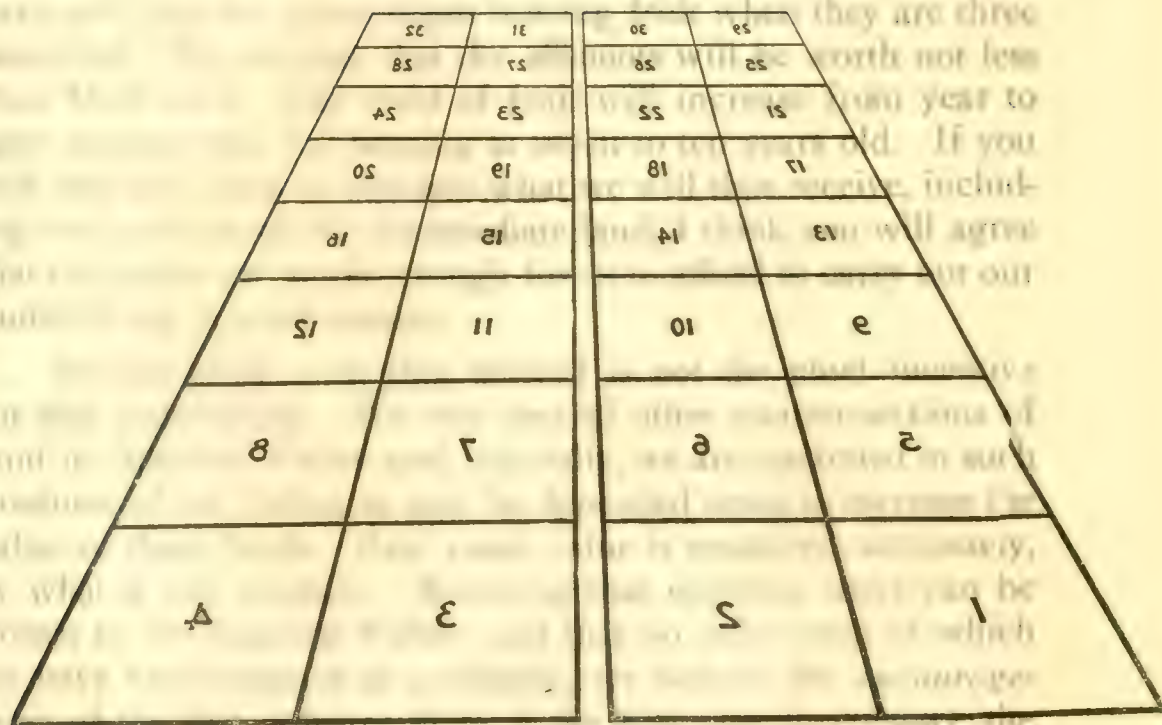
dens. We do not, however, expect to derive any profit from the sale of the land, as it is being put in at its reasonable value, to-day. Our profit will arise from the use of the land in the meantime, and from offshoots and dates which the palms will produce from and after the third year until the tract is turned over to the purchaser. It should be understood that the imported offshoots are kept in nursery-rows for one year from arrival, to get them well rooted. They are then re-set in the orchard. They should afford, at least, one offshoot the second year after being set in the orchard, and two, or more, offshoots each year thereafter from each palm, for the next fifteen or twenty years. (All but one offshoot should be taken away from the palm, as soon as the offshoot is large enough to be rooted, for the good of the palm.) We have seen that the palms begin bearing fruit when they are three years old. We estimate that the offshoots will be worth not less than \$4.00 each. The yield of fruit will increase from year to year, coming into full bearing at seven to ten years old. If you will take the pains to estimate what we will thus receive, including the products of the intermediate land, I think you will agree that the profits are ample enough for us to afford to carry out our undertaking in good manner.

But the profit to be thus derived is not the chief incentive for this undertaking. We own several other quarter-sections of land in Imperial Valley and, naturally, we are interested in such products of the Valley as may be depended upon to increase the value of these lands. Real estate value is measured, accurately, by what it will produce. Knowing that excellent dates can be grown in the Imperial Valley, and that no other crop of which we have knowledge is as profitable, we believe the *encouragement* of the date industry there is the best way to enhance the value of these lands, and that it will make them the highest priced of any in this country.

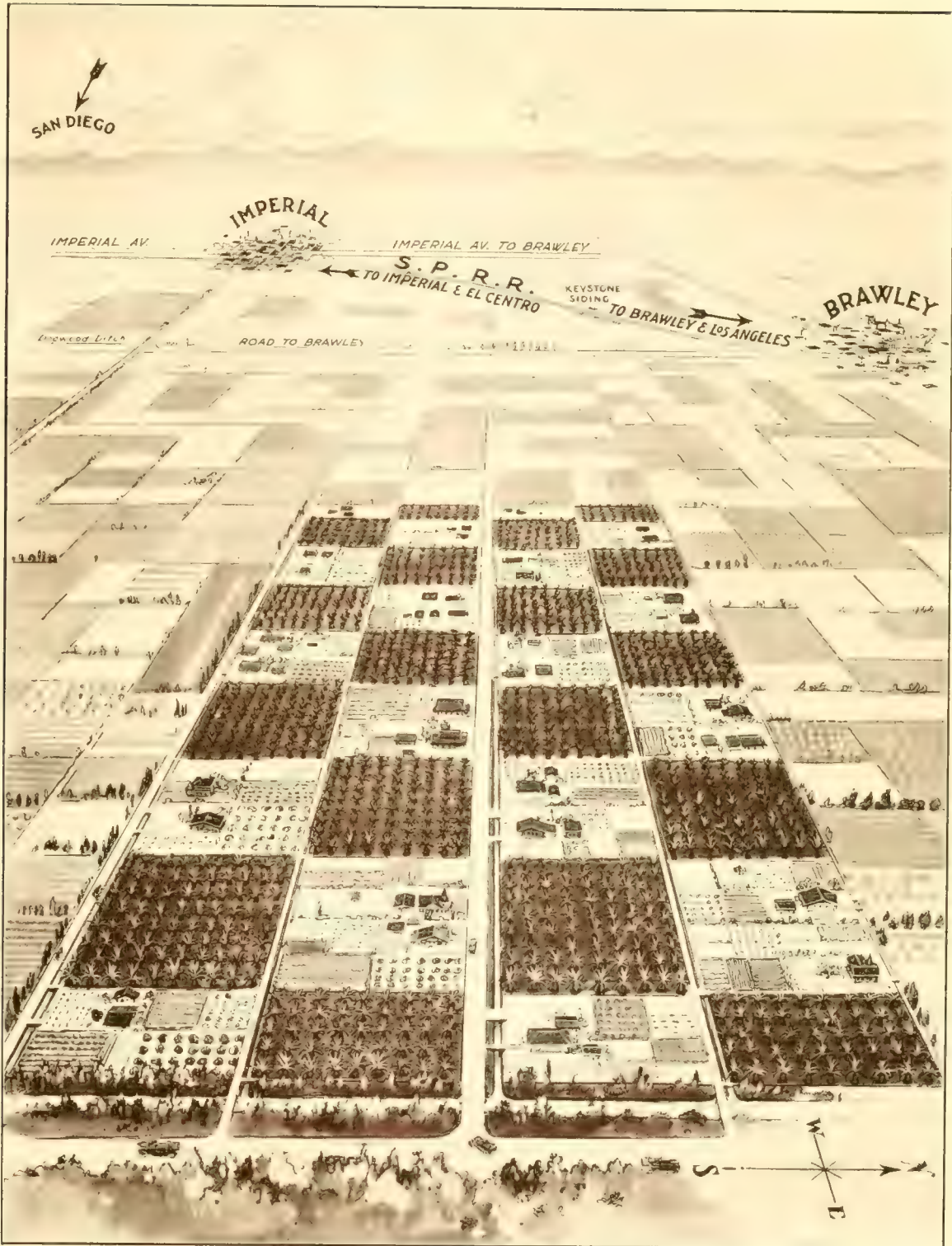


Plat of the Thirty-two Date Orchards Offered for Sale

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16



Plat of the Thirty-two Date Orchards Offered for Sale



Your Decision

Your decision in this matter of buying one of these gardens will be based largely, and rightly so, upon the responsibility of the Reed-Williams Corporation, owner of this tract of land. For this reason the officers of this corporation invite your most rigid investigation, both of the Reed-Williams Corporation as a unit, and of its individual members.

This corporation owns and operates considerable valuable land in Imperial Valley, besides the individual members of the corporation own several good farms in the Middle West. It is abundantly able financially to carry out its undertakings. It maintains offices in Los Angeles and El Centro, California.

In the same manner that I was convinced of Imperial Valley's future for big date profits I believe you will be convinced. The date is a new phase of agriculture to many of us, yet the most important one Californians have overlooked.

Assuming that what I have here stated has somewhat interested you, and that you would be pleased to see and to sample some of these California-grown dates, we have placed an order with Mr. Johnston for some of his dates, and we will take the liberty of having a representative call upon you with some of them, and to give you any further information we have upon the subject. I believe you will appreciate this privilege of obtaining one or more of these date gardens when you have investigated the subject of date growing as fully as I have.

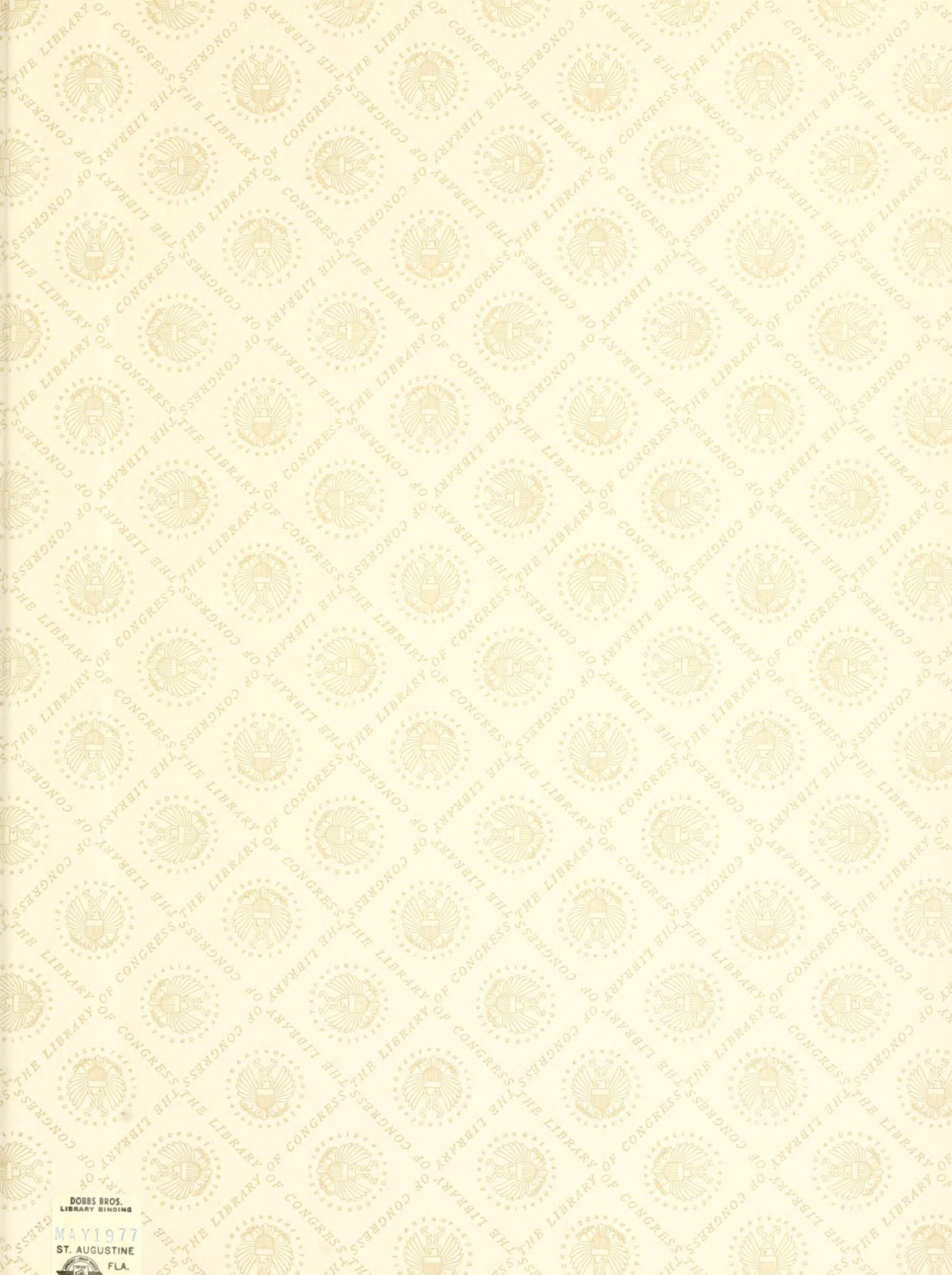
Yours truly,

President

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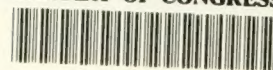


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